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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Iraq

SUBJECT Notes on Health and Sanitation in the City of Mosul, and
Nearby Village of HavreshPLACE ACQUIRED
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Mosul:

1. Mosul is the second largest city of Iraq, and is linked by rail with Baghdad, the capital and largest city of the country. Mosul is on the upper reaches of the Tigris, and in rolling plain country; the elevation of this northern part of Iraq, and the surrounding mountain area, affords a cooler and less humid climate in the summer.
2. Endemic Diseases: Malaria, hookworm, amoebiasis, other enteric diseases, and malnutrition are common to this part of the country, judging from a visit to the large government hospital at Baghdad. Anemia afflicts a large part of the peasant population principally through hookworm, and malnutrition or both.

3. Water:

(a) Mosul appears to have a water system, for at least a part of the city. We noted a group of large elevated tanks, and a pumping plant which drew its water from wells, in the section of the city near the Railway Station Hotel [REDACTED]

(b) Consumption of water is probably very low, judging from the small amount of water to be seen in the surface gutters of the streets.

(c) The water from the hotel taps had a strong odor of chlorine, [REDACTED] without hesitation. Bottled waters are offered in the hotel restaurants, [REDACTED] did not use them. These bottles were loosely corked, and often rather dirty on the outside; on the inside, who knows?

(d) No doubt the river water is used by many in the city, and certainly by the surrounding town and village population, where women could be seen carrying water jugs.

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4. Food:

- (a) There appears to be no inspection or sanitary control over food whatsoever.
- (b) Milk is principally goat and sheep milk. There may be some cow's milk available, as in Baghdad, where an English company does operate a dairy and distributes a safe pasteurized milk.
- (c) The city probably does not have a sanitary sewerage system. Privies are on the roofs of buildings near the outer walls; the excreta vaults are built into the thick walls, and when full, a hole is made in the wall, and the waste carted out of town, to be used as fertilizer.
- (d) There are water-flushed toilets in the Railway Station Hotel, probably served by septic tanks. Waste water seen in the city runs in trickles down the center of side streets. None was seen in the main streets. Apparently there is some sort of sewer under these streets; the end of this sewer empties into an open ditch in the lower end of town not far from the railway station; this water is septic, is of rather small volume, and probably finds its way to the river.

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- (e) [REDACTED] there is very little garbage, and refuse is at a minimum. There are street sweepers and the streets are free generally of animal droppings, which no doubt are used for fertilizer.
- (f) Human excreta may be seen in any vacant lot in the town, and sometimes along the walls bordering the "sidewalks," and the odor of urine is overpowering along some of these stretches of walls. It is more pleasant to walk in the street, off the "curb," and if one takes a short-cut through a vacant area, he watches his step.

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- (g) Burial in the ground is the method of disposal of the dead.

- (h) In the places [REDACTED] spraying of insecticide was copious and continuous, for fly control; the odor of kerosene solvent was common and a thin film of oil on everything was usually noticeable. Mosquitoes are a problem also, though not unusually so during [REDACTED] May. [REDACTED] no information on rodents, fleas or lice.

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5. There is one government hospital of about 100 to 200 beds for all segments of the public. There are native and European doctors. A general type of service is available, but perhaps dentistry is not.

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- 6. [REDACTED] no evidence of an active local health and welfare service, except the hospital services.

7. Conclusions on Health and Sanitation Data:

- (a) Health conditions, poor; sanitation, very poor; medical care, fair to good; climatic effect, probably good; in this respect it resembled the Sacramento (California) valley-foothill country, as it did physically, except for an almost complete lack of trees and brush.
- (b) It would seem that good physical health would depend on extra precautions to protect and process foods, protection against insect-born disease, immunization against typhoid, para-typhoid and smallpox. (Also diphtheria and pertussis for children.)
- (c) Education is apparently free to all children, though I recall seeing only boys in the schools of Mosul; probably only a small percentage of children attend the schools. Some of the teen-age boys could speak a little English.

Hovayesh:

- 8. Hovayesh is a small mudhouse village of about 100 families, located in the rolling plain about 50 miles north of Mosul and several miles east of the Tigris. Roads to water do not even macadam road in fair condition, except for the last half hour of the trip. This portion over an almost trackless open field, where the car could sometimes hardly be seen. (Not negotiable when raining.)

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10. Climate is probably more pleasant and healthful than in Mosul; the rainfall resembles that of the Ione area in the Sacramento Valley (California). Dry farming (wheat and barley) is practiced, (not enough water for irrigation) and goat and sheep raising for meat, wool and milk products.
11. Malaria is probably quite prevalent and the use of anti-malarials is common.
12. Water is from some dug wells with rope and bucket, somewhat protected against surface contamination, and a developed spring and small reservoir in a usually dry creek bed at the lower end of town; surface waters no doubt do get infected from the "streets" in rainy weather. A few households have their own wells. Overall water is scarce and quite a problem.
13. Food is locally produced in a more sanitary manner, generally, than elsewhere in Iraq, since this community is made up of Christians more acquainted with western ways.
14. Pest control: screening and spraying for flies and mosquitoes; an agricultural pest which for some years seriously attacked the grain crops, was, with the help of the government, brought under control.
15. Medical care, such as it is, is given by a resident government "pharmacist," from the pharmacy, with the aid of a miscellaneous collection of bottles including some obsolete material and some instruction manuals. For more expert care, the patient has to travel to Mosul.
16. The children seemed well cared for, generally.
17. An elementary school of three small classrooms, is staffed by three resident government-supplied men teachers. Grades probably correspond to the first to tenth. Higher education must be sought in the cities.
18. Sewage disposal: pit privies.

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